AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions and listings of claims in the application:

1. (Currently Amended) A process for decreasing the concentration of cholesterol in a marine oil ~~containing~~ in a pharmaceutical composition, the marine oil comprising cholesterol in free form, ~~characterized in that the~~ said process ~~comprises~~ comprising ~~the steps:~~ ~~of~~

a) adding a volatile working fluid to the marine oil, wherein the volatile working fluid comprises at least one ~~member of the group consisting of~~ fluid chosen from fatty acid esters, fatty acid amides, and hydrocarbons, and

b) subjecting the mixture of marine oil and volatile working fluid from step (a) to at least one stripping processing step, ~~in which~~ wherein an amount of the cholesterol present in the marine oil in free form is separated from the mixture together with the volatile working fluid; and

wherein said pharmaceutical composition is not a health supplement.

2. (Currently Amended) ~~A~~ The process according to claim 1, wherein the volatile working fluid is essentially equally or less volatile than the cholesterol in free form that is to be separated from the marine oil mixture.

3. (Currently Amended) ~~A~~ The process according to claim 1, wherein the fatty acid moieties of said fatty acid esters and fatty acid amides are obtained from a fat or oil ~~selected from the group consisting of~~ obtained from at least one of vegetable, microbial, and animal origins ~~fats and oils~~.

4. (Currently Amended) ~~A~~ The process according to claim 3, wherein the animal fat or oil is a marine oil.

5. (Currently Amended) ~~A~~ The process according to claim 1, wherein the volatile working fluid comprises at least one fatty acid ester composed of a C10-C22 fatty acid esterified with a C1-C4 alcohol.

6. (Currently Amended) ~~A~~ The process according to claim 1, wherein the marine oil ~~contains~~ comprises at least one fatty acid chosen from saturated fatty acids in the form of triglycerides and unsaturated fatty acids in the form of triglycerides, and wherein the marine oil is obtained from fish or sea mammals.

7. (Currently Amended) ~~A~~ The process according to claim 1, wherein the ratio of (volatile working fluid) : (marine oil) ~~is~~ ranges from about 1:100 to 15:100.

8. (Currently Amended) ~~A~~ The process according to claim 7, wherein the ratio of (volatile working fluid) : (marine oil) ~~is~~ ranges from about 3:100 to 8:100.

9. (Currently Amended) ~~A~~ The process according to claim 1, wherein said at least one stripping processing step is carried out at a temperature[[s]] in the range of 120-270°C.

10. (Currently Amended) ~~A~~ The process according to claim 1, wherein said at least one stripping processing step is carried out at a temperature[[s]] in the range of 150-220°C.

11. (Currently Amended) ~~A~~ The process according to claim 1, wherein said at least one stripping processing step is carried out at a pressure below 1 mbar.

12. (Currently Amended) ~~A~~ The process according to claim I, wherein ~~the~~ said at least one stripping processing step is chosen from ~~one of a~~ thin-film evaporation

processes, ~~a~~ molecular distillations, ~~or a~~ short-path distillations, and ~~or~~ any combinations thereof.

13. (Currently Amended) ~~A~~ The process according to claim 12, wherein the thin-film evaporation process is carried out at a mixture flow rate in the range of 30-150 $kg/h \cdot m^2$.

14. (Currently Amended) ~~A~~ The process according to claim 1, wherein said at least one stripping processing step is carried out at a mixture flow rate in the range of 80-150 $kg/h \cdot m^2$.

Claims 15-18 (Cancelled)

19. (Currently Amended) ~~A~~ The process according to claim 1, wherein the volatile working fluid is a distillate fraction from a process in which a mixture comprising at least one of ethyl and~~/or~~ methyl esters of fatty acids obtained from marine oil is fractionated by distillation.

20. (Currently Amended) ~~A~~ The process according to claim 1 wherein the marine oil ~~also contains~~ further comprises cholesterol in bound form, and wherein the at least one stripping processing step is followed by the steps: ~~of~~

c) subjecting the stripped marine oil to at least one trans-esterification reaction with a C_1-C_6 alcohol under substantially anhydrous conditions; ~~,~~ and ~~thereafter~~

d) subjecting the transesterified marine oil from step (c) to at least one distillation procedure that yields a distillate marine oil fraction and a residue marine oil fraction, ~~and in which the~~ wherein the distillate marine oil fraction has concentrations of ~~both~~ free and bound cholesterol ~~that are~~ lower than in the residue fraction.

21. (Currently Amended) ~~A~~ The process according to claim 20, wherein said C_1-C_6 alcohol is ethanol.

Claims 22 and 23 (Cancelled)

24. (Previously presented) A pharmaceutical composition that comprises a lowered-cholesterol-content marine oil, prepared according to the process of claim 1.

25. (Currently Amended) ~~A~~The pharmaceutical composition according to claim 24, wherein said marine oil is fish oil.

Claims 26 and 27 (Cancelled)

28. (Previously presented) A pharmaceutical composition that comprises a lowered-cholesterol-content marine oil prepared according to the process of claim 20.

29. (Currently Amended) ~~A~~ The pharmaceutical composition that comprises a lowered-cholesterol-content marine oil according to claim 28, wherein said marine oil is fish oil.

30. (New) A process for decreasing the concentration of cholesterol in a marine oil comprising cholesterol in free form comprising:

a) adding a volatile working fluid to the marine oil, wherein the volatile working fluid comprises at least one fluid chosen from fatty acid esters, fatty acid amides, and hydrocarbons, and

b) subjecting the mixture of marine oil and volatile working fluid from step (a) to at least one stripping processing step, wherein an amount of the cholesterol present in the marine oil in free form is separated from the mixture together with the volatile working fluid;

wherein said process decreases the concentration of cholesterol in free form in the pharmaceutical composition to 1.4 mg/g to 3 mg/g.

31. (New) The process according to claim 30, wherein the volatile working fluid is essentially equally or less volatile than the cholesterol in free form that is to be separated from the marine oil mixture.

32. (New) The process according to claim 30, wherein the fatty acid moieties of said fatty acid esters and fatty acid amides are obtained from a fat or oil obtained from at least one of vegetable, microbial, and animal origins.

33. (New) The process according to claim 32, wherein the animal fat or oil is a marine oil.

34. (New) The process according to claim 30, wherein the volatile working fluid comprises at least one fatty acid ester composed of a C10-C22 fatty acid esterified with a C1-C4 alcohol.

35. (New) The process according to claim 30, wherein the marine oil comprises at least one fatty acid chosen from saturated fatty acids in the form of triglycerides and unsaturated fatty acids in the form of triglycerides, and wherein the marine oil is obtained from fish or sea mammals.

36. (New) A pharmaceutical composition that comprises a lowered-cholesterol-content marine oil prepared according to the process of claim 30.

37. (New) The pharmaceutical composition that comprises a lowered-cholesterol-content marine oil according to claim 36, wherein said marine oil is fish oil.